

Miracles of the New Testament

Part 1

Introduction

Who hasn't thrilled over Jesus' awe-inspiring miracles in the New Testament? Because their recounting is a part of our culture, many are familiar with them, even non-Christians. In this study we will try to bring perspective to them and understand their purpose in Jesus' ministry.

"[Jesus] went about doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil because God was with him" (Acts 10:38).

Much of Jesus' [and His disciples'] "doing good" was in the form of miracles.

Our Study

Because of space limitations, we have had to condense many of the scripture passages, but if you have a Bible we suggest you read them in their entirety.

Let us look at as many miracles as we have space for here. But first we want to consider the question: Why did Jesus perform miracles?

Here's what the Apostle John has to say about their overall purpose: *"Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of His disciples, which are recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name."* (John 20:30).

In addition, Scripture gives us at least six specific purposes:

1. to accredit Him
2. to prove His authority
3. to show that the Kingdom of God had come
4. to confirm Jesus' messages
5. to fulfill prophecy
6. and to express Jesus' compassion

Jesus always refused to perform miracles just for show. Here's a look at His well-known encounter with Satan.

The Scripture: Matthew 4:1

"Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. After forty days and forty nights...the tempter came to Him and said, 'If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.' Jesus answered, 'It is written, "Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God."' Then the devil took Him to the holy city and had Him stand on the highest point of the temple. 'If you are the Son of God,' he said, 'Throw yourself down' ...Jesus answered him, 'It is written, "Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

...The devil showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. 'All this I will give You,' he said, 'if You will bow down and worship me.' Jesus said... 'It is written: "Worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only.'"

1. What were the temptations about? _____

2. What did Satan tell Him to do? _____

3. How did Jesus respond? _____

Satan was not the only one who tempted Jesus.

The Scripture: Matthew 16:1, 4

"The Pharisees and Sadducees came to Jesus and tested Him by asking Him to show them a sign from heaven. He replied, 'A wicked and adulterous generation looks for a miraculous sign, but none will be given it except the sign of Jonah.'"

4. Why did the religious leaders come to Jesus? _____

5. How did Jesus describe them? _____

6. Why? _____

7. How did He respond to their request? _____

When Jesus spoke of the sign of Jonah, He was referring to the fact that Jonah was in "a great fish's belly" for three days and nights just as He would be in the earth's "belly" after His death.

When He performed His miracles, Jesus often told people to keep the miracle a secret.

The Scripture: Matthew 9:30-31

"After He had healed two blind men, 'He touched their eyes...and their sight was restored. Jesus warned them sternly, 'See that no one knows about this.' But they went out and spread the news about him all over that region.'"

8. Who came to Jesus? _____

9. What did Jesus do? _____

10. What happened? _____

11. What did Jesus say to them? _____

12. What did they do? _____

Again and again, Jesus cautioned those healed not to tell anyone.

Now we'll look at the specific reasons why Jesus performed miracles.

To Accredite Him

The Scripture: Acts 2:22

The gospel writer, Luke, says, *"Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through Him, as you yourselves know."*

13. What did the miracles, wonders and signs do? _____

In other words, the fact that Jesus could perform these miracles showed that He was indeed the Son of God.

To Show Jesus' Authority

The Scripture: Matthew 9: 4-8

"Knowing their thoughts, Jesus said... 'Which is easier to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and walk.' But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins... Get up, take your mat and go home.'" And the man got up and went home. When the crowd saw this, they were filled with awe; and they praised God, who had given such authority to men."

14. What did Jesus tell the man to do? _____

15. What did the crowd do? _____

16. Why? _____

17. What did the man do? _____

To Show the Kingdom Of God Had Come

The Scripture: Matthew 12:24

"The people brought a demon-possessed man who was both blind and mute to Jesus. Jesus healed him. [The Pharisees said], 'It is only by Beelzebub, the prince of demons, that this fellow drives out demons.'"

18. To whom did the Pharisees give credit for the miracle? _____

The Scripture: Matthew 12:25, 27-29

[Jesus said:] *"Every kingdom divided against itself will be ruined... But if I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you."*

19. What did Jesus say? _____

To Confirm Jesus' Messages

The Scripture: Acts 14:3

"Paul and Barnabas spent considerable time here (in Iconium) speaking boldly for the Lord, who confirmed the message of his grace by enabling them to do miraculous signs and wonders."

20. What did Paul and Barnabas do? _____

21. How did the Lord confirm Paul's and Barnabas' message? _____

To Fulfill Prophecy

The Scripture: Matthew 12: 15-21

"Jesus withdrew... Many followed Him, and He healed all their sick, warning them not to tell who He was. This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah: 'Here is My servant whom I have chosen, the one I love in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on Him, and He will proclaim justice to the nations. He will not quarrel or cry out, no one will hear His voice in the streets. A bruised reed He will not break, and a smoldering wick He will not snuff out, till He leads justice to victory. In His name the nations will put their hope.'"

22. What did Jesus do? _____

23. Why? _____

To Express Jesus' Compassion

One of the things that largely drew people to the Lord was His compassion.

The Scripture: Matthew 9: 35-36

"Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. When He saw the crowds, He had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd."

24. What did Jesus feel when He saw the crowds? _____

25. Why? _____

The Scripture: Luke 7:11-15

"Jesus went to a town called Nain, and His disciples and a large crowd went along with Him. As He approached the town edge, a dead person was being carried out - the only son of his mother, and she was a widow. And a large crowd from the town was with her. When the Lord saw her, His heart went out to her and He said, 'Don't cry.' Then He went up and touched the coffin and those carrying it out stood still. He said, 'Young man, I say to you get up!'" The dead man sat up and began to talk, and Jesus gave him back to his mother."

26. Where were Jesus and His disciples? _____

27. What did they meet? _____

28. Who had died? _____

29. What were Jesus' emotions? _____

30. What did Jesus do? _____

31. What did the young man do? _____

In this culture, the position of a widow with no male offspring could be desperate. With no one else to support her, she could even be sold as a slave.

In the next part of this study, we will look at many of the miracles Jesus and His followers performed.

The Answers

1. If Jesus were the Son of God and tempting Him to achieve His mission on earth in ways apart from God's directive
2. To turn stones into bread, to throw Himself off the temple, to bow down and worship him.
3. In each case, He refused by reciting Scripture.
4. To test Him
5. As a wicked and adulterous generation
6. Because they wanted a miraculous sign
7. He refused it
8. Two blind men
9. He touched their eyes.
10. Their sight was restored.
11. "See that no one knows about this."
12. They spread the news about Him all over the region.
13. They accredited Jesus.
14. "Get up, take your mat and go home."
15. They praised God.
16. Because He had given such authority to Jesus
17. He got up.
18. Beelzebub
19. That every kingdom divided against itself would be ruined. But if He drove out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God had come
20. Spoke boldly and did miraculous signs and wonders
21. By enabling them to do these miracles and wonders
22. He withdrew when the people found Him
23. He healed all their sick to fulfill the scripture in Isaiah
24. Compassion
25. He saw them as harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.
26. In a town called Nain
27. A funeral procession
28. A young man, the only son of a widow
29. His heart went out to her.
30. He comforted the mother, then touched the coffin and told the young man to get up.
31. He sat up and began to talk.

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